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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/715,539	11/19/2003	Jean-Luc Veux	P24378	5585
7055	7590	01/10/2006	EXAMINER	
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.			BELLINGER, JASON R	
1950 ROLAND CLARKE PLACE			ART UNIT	
RESTON, VA 20191			PAPER NUMBER	

3617

DATE MAILED: 01/10/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/715,539

Applicant(s)

VEUX ET AL.

Examiner

Jason R. Bellinger

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 November 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 11-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 7, 17 and 18 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 9, 11-16 and 19-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 8 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Claim Objections

1. Claims 1, 6, and 8 are objected to because of the following informalities: The term "the" should be replaced with the term --a-- prior to the term "central" in line 12 of claim 1.

The term "projecting" should be removed from line 3 of claim 6. The phrase "exteriorly of" should be replaced with the phrase --radially outwardly from-- in line 4 of claim 8.

These corrections are for grammatical clarity; to fix antecedent issues in the claims, and to correspond to similar amendments made to other claims. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

3. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lacombe et al ('676) in view of Nakasaki and in further view of Sacks.

Figures 6-7 of Lacombe et al show a wheel having a rim 2 with an upper bridge 10 that forms an outer annular channel on which a tire 5 may be mounted. The upper bridge 10 includes a central well 20 bordered with opposite lateral edges (24-25), with a pair of opposite lateral flanges (14-15) that are substantially parallel to the radial plane of the rim 2. Each lateral flange (14-15) includes laterally opposed lips (16-17) at the

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upper ends thereof. A sealing strip 34 engages the central well 20 of the rim 2. A valve hole 18 is bordered with a flange that projects in a direction inwardly (namely to connect with the lower bridge 11) of the sealing strip 34.

Lacombe et al does not show the sealing strip 34 extending beyond the central well 20. Nakasaki teaches the use of a generally U-shaped sealing strip 4 is positioned within the outer annular channel of a rim 3. The sealing strip 4 includes a depression positioned over the well of the bridge 3a of the rim 3 that forms a radial groove adapted to receive a pair of beads 9 of a tire 1. A pair of lateral extensions 4a extends laterally outwardly from the depression, and is positioned over the lateral edges 3b of the bridge 3a. A pair of walls extends radially from the lateral extensions 4a, and is positioned along the lateral flanges 3c of the rim 3.

A pair of lips (namely the outer most ends of the walls of the sealing strip 4) extends inwardly from the walls (since the lips and walls are formed by the lateral extensions 4a), while not extending radially outwardly beyond the lips 3d of the flanges 3c. Namely, the lips of the lateral extensions 4a of the sealing strip 4 have uppermost ends position at a height with respect to a cross section of the sealing strip 4 that allows the lips to be positioned no higher than the uppermost ends of the lips 4d of the flanges 4c of the rim 4.

The U-shaped groove includes lateral walls (namely formed by the lateral extensions 4a) that have projecting ridges and grooves 8 that mechanically connect with the ridges and grooves 7 of the central well of the rim 3.

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Therefore from this teaching, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to form the sealing strip of Lacombe et al with the characteristics as taught by Nakasaki as a substitution of equivalent sealing strips, for the purpose of more positively sealing the rim and reducing the chance of the sealing strip from moving out of place during mounting of a tire on the rim.

Lacombe et al as modified by Nakasaki does not show the pair of lips extending laterally inward from respective walls of the sealing strip, and having a generally radially inwardly facing tire retaining surface. Sacks teaches the use of a sealing strip 44 including a pair of lips 54 that extend laterally inwardly from respective walls 48. These lips 54 are positioned radially inward and beneath laterally opposed lips 24 of the upper ends of flanges 20 of a rim 12. Each of the lips 54 has a generally radially inwardly facing tire retaining surface. Each of the lips 54 also has a cross section that narrows in a direction extending towards the median plane of the sealing strip 44. Each lip 54 of the sealing strip 44 has an exterior support surface that is oriented substantially perpendicular to a general direction of the walls 48 of the sealing strip 44.

Therefore from this teaching, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to form the lips the sealing strip of Lacombe et al as modified by Nakasaki in the manner taught by Sacks for the purpose of providing additional means for retaining/seating the tire beads on the rim, while also sealing the rim.

While Lacombe et al as modified by Nakasaki and Sacks does not specify that the lips of the sealing strip projects approximately 0.85mm from the respective inner surface of the walls of the sealing strip, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to form the lips with a thickness sufficient to function properly at sealing the rim without interfering with the seating of the tire on the rim, and/or to assist in retaining the tire on the rim.

4. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lacombe et al ('676) in view of Nakasaki and in further view of Sacks as applied to claims 1-6 above, and further in view of Chen ('937). Lacombe et al as modified by Nakasaki and Sacks does not show the sealing strip having a valve hole with a flange projecting radially inward from the sealing strip.

In Figures 4-6, Chen teaches the use of a "rim base" 62 that includes a valve hole 602 bordered by a flange 61 that projects radially inward from the "rim base" 62.

Therefore from this teaching, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to form the sealing strip of Lacombe et al as modified by Nakasaki and Sacks with a valve hole bordered by a radially inwardly projecting flange for the purpose of providing a sealing means between a valve stem and the rim, thus providing an airtight rim.

5. Claims 11-16 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakasaki in view of Sacks. Nakasaki shows a rim 3 having an outer

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annular channel that includes a pair of lateral flanges 3c having a pair of laterally opposed lips 3d at the radially outer ends of each flange 3c. A bridge 3a extends between the lateral flanges 3c, and includes a pair of lateral edges 3b extending inwardly from the lateral flanges 3c toward a median plane of the rim 3 and a well extending inwardly from the lateral edges 3b.

A sealing strip 4 is positioned within the outer annular channel. The sealing strip 4 includes a depression positioned over the well of the bridge 3a that forms a radial groove adapted to receive a pair of beads 9 of a tire 1. A pair of lateral extensions 4a extends laterally outwardly from the depression, and is positioned over the lateral edges 3b of the bridge 3a. A pair of walls extends radially from the lateral extensions 4a, and is positioned along the lateral flanges 3c of the rim 3. A pair of lips (namely the outer most ends of the walls of the sealing strip 4) extends inward from the walls (since the lips and walls are formed by the lateral extensions 4a), while not extending radially outwardly beyond the lips 3d of the flanges 3c.

The lips of the lateral extensions 4a have radially outermost ends positioned no further radially than the outermost ends of the lips 3d of the flanges 3c of the rim 3. The well of the bridge 3a includes a pair of lateral walls (namely formed by the lateral edges 3b) that include projecting ridges and grooves 7. The depression of the sealing strip 4 includes a pair of lateral walls (namely formed by the lateral extensions 4a) having projecting ridges and grooves 8 that mechanically connect with the ridges and grooves 7 of the annular channel of the rim 3. The rim includes a plurality of spokes mounted in openings in the rim 3 (see column 1, lines 9-14).

Nakasaki does not show the pair of lips extending laterally inward from respective walls of the sealing strip, and having a generally radially inwardly facing tire retaining surface. Sacks teaches the use of a sealing strip 44 including a pair of lips 54 that extend laterally inwardly from respective walls 48. These lips 54 are positioned radially inward and beneath laterally opposed lips 24 of the upper ends of flanges 20 of a rim 12. Each of the lips 54 has a generally radially inwardly facing tire retaining surface. Each of the lips 54 also has a cross section that narrows in a direction extending towards the median plane of the sealing strip 44. Each lip 54 of the sealing strip 44 has an exterior support surface that is oriented substantially perpendicular to a general direction of the walls 48 of the sealing strip 44.

Therefore from this teaching, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to form the lips of Nakasaki in the manner taught by Sacks for the purpose of providing additional means for retaining/seating the tire beads on the rim, while also sealing the rim.

While Nakasaki as modified by Sacks does not specify that the lips of the sealing strip projects approximately 0.85mm from the respective inner surface of the walls of the sealing strip, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to form the lips with a thickness sufficient to function properly at sealing the rim without interfering with the seating of the tire on the rim, and/or to assist in retaining the tire on the rim.

6. Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakasaki in view of Sacks as applied to claims 11-16 and 20-21 above, and further in view of Chen ('937). Nakasaki as modified by Sacks does not show the sealing strip having a valve hole with a flange projecting radially inward from the sealing strip.

In Figures 4-6, Chen teaches the use of a "rim base" 62 that includes a valve hole 602 bordered by a flange 61 that projects radially inward from the "rim base" 62.

Therefore from this teaching, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to form the sealing strip of Nakasaki as modified by Sacks with a valve hole bordered by a radially inwardly projecting flange for the purpose of providing a sealing means between a valve stem and the rim, thus providing an airtight rim.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 7 and 17-18 are allowable over the prior art.

8. Claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objection(s) set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-9 and 11-21 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

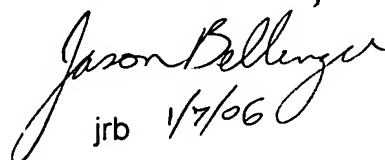
10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The Sahagian reference shows a rim having a sealing strip that also assists in retaining a tire on the rim.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jason R. Bellinger whose telephone number is 571-272-6680. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Thurs (9:00-4:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Morano can be reached on 571-272-6684. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Jason R Bellinger
Examiner
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jrb 1/7/06